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9 January 1963

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Meeting with Representative George H. Mahon

1. The Director, accompanied by John S. Warner, met with Representative George H. Mahon for well over an hour this afternoon. The Director pointed out that he had had prepared a very complete review of the performance of the intelligence community in the Cuban crisis which had then been reviewed by the United States Intelligence Board and approved. The review was conducted by the Agency Inspector General but to make sure it reflected the community views, representatives of Defense and State were placed on the IG staff for this purpose. The purpose of the review was to determine if there were any deficiencies or any way in which improvement could be made. The Director stated that it was the unanimous conclusion of USIB that the intelligence had been excellent and could not have been handled in any way which would have altered the final timing of the policy decisions. Some possible improvements were noted. The DCI also stated that one of his purposes in desiring to discuss this report with the Subcommittee was because of charges that the Government had information earlier and had withheld it for political purposes. He stated these charges were simply not true. The Director stated he would like to meet with the Subcommittee at the earliest possible time and hoped for regular meetings during the year.

2. Mr. Mahon indicated frankly that he had some skepticism and in light of subsequent events felt Mr. McCone had known more at the meeting of 10 October with the Subcommittee than he had indicated. He indicated that he had received word from a number of sources in the Pentagon that they did not believe missiles would be placed in Cuba, consequently, the Director's warning on this was very much in his mind when, in fact, the announcements were made. The Director then related

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precisely what he had stated in the 10 October meeting eventually reading an excerpt of the pertinent parts of the memorandum for the record of that meeting. The Director also furnished Mr. Mahon some of the background facts and chronology which enabled Mr. Mahon to understand the sequence of events. The Director emphasized his belief, experts notwithstanding, that the Soviets would put in missiles was not based on any hard intelligence but was simply his judgment of what would occur. Mr. Mahon stated that the relating of this story to members of Congress could cause some difficulty in that it would indicate a cleavage of views at the time but eventually he came around to the view that facts were facts and had to be faced.

3. The Director then discussed OXCART pointing out the Air Force had a legitimate requirement for a new reconnaissance aircraft and that this subject had been discussed at length with Secretary McNamara. The Director mentioned some of the problems in surfacing the vehicle. The Director brought Mr. Mahon up to date on the performance of the vehicle. Mr. Mahon did not have any particular comments on the surfacing problem.

4. Mr. Mahon then brought up the question of the composition of the new Subcommittee and indicated he planned to speak to the Chairman about this. He stated he was going to suggest that the Subcommittee in effect be brought under the wing of the Defense Subcommittee and in this way the membership of the CIA Subcommittee would be taken from his Subcommittee and would, in effect, place Ostertag on the Subcommittee in lieu of Jensen. He stated that, of course, Mr. Cannon would continue to sit or would chair the Subcommittee. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Mr. Mahon then mentioned the pressure from his Subcommittee members to receive intelligence briefings from CIA and he stated he proposed to raise this issue with Mr. Cannon and asked if the Director would be willing to appear. The Director stated that he would appear to discuss the Soviet posture and it was agreed that if he did appear there would be no discussion of the Agency's budget or its methods of operations and would be limited to discussion of finished intelligence.

5. The entire discussion was conducted in a most cordial way and was extremely useful in bringing to light the true nature of Mr. Mahon's concern about whether the DCI had been fully forthcoming. It appeared also that Representative Gerald Ford's concern in this regard related to the same subject matter as indicated above.

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Legislative Counsel